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ABSTRACT

Listening skills are the most used and least taught of the communication skills. However, in 1978 the United States federal government, through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, added listening and speaking to reading, writing, and arithmetic as determinants of literacy and needed basic competencies. Through the 1978 legislation, funds have been directed to states to develop programs in listening and speech, as well as in more traditional basic skills. Also, the number of universities offering separate listening courses has increased in response to demands from the business and professional community. Within recent years, several corporations, realizing the importance of effective listening, have provided formal training programs in listening. Communication authorities cite five purposes of effective listening: appreciative, discrimination, comprehensive, therapeutic, and critical. Eight factors critical to one's listening ability include willingness, attention, reception, concentration, perception, nonverbal, value moment, and feedback. Guidelines pertinent to improving listening skills can be classified as those more applicable to speakers than to the listeners, those more applicable to the listeners than to the speakers, and those applicable to speakers and listeners simultaneously. (HOD)

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RECENT FEDERAL LEGISLATION ADDED LISTENING AS A DETERMINANT OF LITERACY: EDUCATORS MUST PROVIDE LISTENING INSTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT

Listening skills are the most used and least taught of the communication skills. Historically, reading, speaking, and writing skills have received the major instruction time. However, in 1978 the federal government, through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, added listening and speaking to reading, writing, and arithmetic as determinants of literacy and needed basic competencies. Awareness by business and government demands that quality instruction of listening principles be provided. Five listening purposes that included appreciative, discriminative, comprehensive, therapeutic, and critical encompass listening factors of attention, nonverbal, concentration, perception, reception, value moment, feedback, retention, and further action. Guidelines and techniques to improve listening instruction are presented.

INTRODUCTION

> The problem is not one of getting men to talk.
> The problem is one of getting leaders to listen.
> ---Carl F. Braun [20, p.60]

Four major communication skills are: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Historically, the first three have been included in educational programs while the fourth has been omitted. Yet, Montgomery (1982) insists that "We listen more than we do any other human activity except breathe" [24, p.8]. Results of research substantiate that individuals spend more time listening than reading, speaking, or writing. Numerous authoritative sources indicate that most adults communicate about 80 percent of their awake hours. Of that 80 percent, the extent to which the four communication skills are used may be delineated as: listening, 45 percent; speaking, 30 percent; reading, 16 percent; and writing, 9 percent [27, p.390]. Brown (1982) reports that "Surveys have indicated that senior officers of major North American corporations spend up to 80 percent of their working time having meetings, discussions, face-to-face conversations, or talking over the telephone." He reports further that most workers spend about 60 percent of the work day listening [4, p.380]. The goal to be

accomplished through this paper is to create awareness of the need for increased listening instruction in endorsement of the 1978 federal act that included listening as a determinant of literacy. Literacy includes the basic responsibility that listeners and speakers understand and be understood. Examples of those with responsibility for listening include trial lawyers, who may listen for contradictions or errors when questioning witnesses; while family counselors, ministers, parents, psychiatrists, social workers, and teachers may listen and speak for many varied purposes. Lyman K. Steil emphasizes that four major purposes of communication include: ". . . persuasion, information, cathartic, and phatic, or binding relationships through small talk" [16]. Wolvin/Coakley (1982) present five listening purposes that include appreciative, discriminative, comprehensive, therapeutic, and critical [31]. Numerous communication leaders emphasize that listening principles encompass the factors of attention, nonverbal, concentration, perception, reception, value moment, feedback, retention, and further action. With increased information flow and technological development, people must be taught how to fulfill basic listening and speaking responsibilities more effectively and efficiently. Since 45 percent of one's awake hours are consumed by listening activities, let's explore the background of the listening movement.

BACKGROUND

According to Farra (1981) the first extensive studies of listening were published in MORALIA by Plutarch nearly 2,000 years ago; yet, Plutarch's principles are quite contemporary. He indicates that we have two ears and one tongue because we should listen more and speak less. Farra indicates that the ears are the gateway to the soul [9]. In this century three pioneers of listening awareness include Paul Rankin (1920s), Ralph G. Nichols (1940s), and Lyman K. Steil (1970s). Their influence and the influence of others is having an impact on increasing listening awareness and instruction. Although a bibliography could be published of listening research, eight sources are cited for their contributions to the listening movement during the last 35 years. Included are results of research that used participants in various educational levels.

The first cited is Miriam E. Wilt, (1950) who determined that elementary students spent 57.5 percent of class time listening. Of that time, 54 percent was spent listening to the teacher. Second, the Commission on the English Curriculum of the National Council of Teachers of English (1952) reported that listening has profound effects on the formation of many attitudes, economic concepts, ethical standards, political ideals, and understandings.

Third, Bird (1953) discovered that college women spent 42 percent of their daily communication time listening. Eighty-two percent of those surveyed considered listening to be equal to or more important than reading as a factor that contributed to academic success [31, p.4]. The results of this research indicates the important effects of listening to learning success.

Fourth, the person recognized as the father of listening instruction and author of the first listening text, Ralph G. Nichols (1957), emphasized that 52 percent of communication instruction included reading, compared to only 8 percent for listening [26, p.6]. Fifth, Margraf (1962) reported that high school students spent 46 percent of class time listening and that 66 percent of that time was spent listening to the teacher. Sixth, McLuhan and Fiore (1967) emphasized that listening alters individuals aesthetically, morally, personally, and psychologically [31, p.7]. Later research demonstrates more need for listening instruction.

Seventh, the federal government, through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1978, added listening and speaking to reading, writing, and arithmetic as determinants of literacy and as needed basic competencies [31, p.11]. Thus, the federal government joined others who believe that listening instruction should be included in the school curriculum. Eighth, the International Listening Association was formed in 1979 by representatives of elementary, junior high, senior high, community colleges, universities, business, with consultants, publishers, and counselors. The purpose being to conduct research, prepare listening tests, and develop model teaching programs.

> Article II of the by-laws of the International Listening Association states the purpose of the Association shall be to promote the study and development of effective listening through . . . the establishment of a network of professionals; exchange of information including teaching methods, training experiences, and materials; and pursuing research as listening affects humanity in economics, education, race, culture, and international relations.

For more information one may write the International Listening Association, 366 North Prior Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104. Also, a pamphlet published by the Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills in Urbana, Illinois, offers teachers 38 ways to teach listening skills [7].

CURRENT EFFORTS

Current efforts may be categorized as those efforts of education and business. Through the 1978 legislation, funds are directed to states that are developing programs in listening and speech, as well as in more traditional basic skills. Minnesota, Massachusetts, Michigan, Vermont, and Virginia have already included listening or oral (aural) communication along with reading, writing, and arithmetic in their list of required basic skills; Illinois, Wisconsin, and others may follow soon. Recently Michigan offered the first statewide listening test. Massachusetts is now preparing a test for which students will respond to pertinent questions after hearing samples of broadcast news, telephone conversations, emergency directions, and classroom assignments. Such LATs--Listening Achievement Tests--could become as common as SATs, at all educational levels [7].

Seven different test sources referenced in recent ILA Listening Posts include:

1. Debbie Roach's "State of the Art in Listening Comprehension: A Compendium of Tests and Measures"
2. Brown-Carlsen Listening Comprehension Test--Form Bm
3. Cattell's 16 PF Personality Inventory--Form C
4. Ralph Nichols's, Dunn and Bradstreet Test
5. SRA's Nonverbal Form--Form AH
6. Wrenn's Study Habits Inventory
7. Enid Waldhart's, Comprehensive Listening Test for Kentucky

According to Marx (1982) "Listening is a key to understanding" [21]. Regarding school systems, he questioned how an organization, like a school system, can listen more effectively. Then he offered three recommendations: First, all school personnel should receive training in effective listening. Second, a school district should develop a systematic plan for listening to the community. Depending upon need and available resources, that plan can include: a regular, possibly annual, scientific opinion poll of staff and community conducted internally or by an outside firm; a requirement that each school, at least once every two years, conduct an informal poll of parents and possibly others in the community; a phone-call-a-week program that encourages teachers and building administrators to make one phone call a week to a parent to learn how "things are going." Two other effective means of creating listening awareness include use of advisory committees and question-answer sessions at community meetings. Third, the school and school district should develop a system to assure that needs as determined through analysis of data are placed on the agenda for discussion and further action.

Also, the number of universities that offer separate listening courses is increasing in response to demand from the business and professional community. Twenty-four university programs were referenced in the May and September issues of ILA Listening Post, and numerous other business training programs were cited.

One of the most active business organizations in the listening effort, Sperry Corporation, published a pamphlet entitled "Your Personal Listening Profile." Information in the pamphlet depicted the order in which the four basic communication skills are learned, degree to which they are used, and extent to which they are taught. Included was:

Communication Skill	When Learned	Extent Used	Extent Taught
Listening	First	45%	Fourth (8%)*
Speaking	Second	30%	Third
Reading	Third	16%	Second (52%)*
Writing	Fourth	9%	First

*As indicated in 1957 by Ralph G. Nichols

Lyman K. Steil, who is recognized as the "Number One Son" (with Ralph G. Nichols as father) of listening instruction is the consultant with the Sperry Corporation. He emphasizes that more instructional effort should be exerted to improve listening skills rather than writing skills, because one can re-read written messages; however, one usually cannot re-listen to oral messages unless they are recorded mechanically. The listener may misunderstand, misinterpret, or forget a high percentage of the original message; but, with proper training, listening skills can be improved. Steil stated recently that more than 85 percent of participants in professionally developed programs showed significant measured improvement as a result of training activities. He reported that with extended, focused training, some participants more than doubled their listening efficiency and effectiveness.

Steil cites that while listening consumes about half of all communication time, one typically listens with about 25 percent of one's abilities. Ineffective listeners are costly whether in business, family, government, or international affairs. For example, with more than 100 million workers in the United States, a simple $10 mistake by each, as a result of poor listening, will cost a billion dollars. Most people make numerous listening mistakes every week although the costs are seldom analyzed. Because of listening mistakes, airplane crashs occur that could have been avoided, appointments have to be rescheduled, letters retyped, and shipments rerouted. Productivity is affected and profits suffer. Steil is convinced that many of the more than three million divorces annually in the United States are related to the inability or the unwillingness of one or both partners to listen. He categorizes listening as (1) merely hearing, (2) interpretation that leads to understanding or misunderstanding, (3) evaluation that involves weighing the information and deciding how to use it, and (4) responses that are based on what is heard, understood, and evaluated [28, pp.65-66].

Within recent years, several other corporations have realized the costliness of poor listening and the importance of effective listening. Other corporations that provide formal training programs in listening are American Telephone and Telegraph, Dun and Bradstreet, General Electric, Pfizer, Pitney Bowes, and Xerox [31, p.12].

Harold T. Smith (1978) of Brigham Young University studied the activities of 457 members of the Academy of Certified Administrative Managers to determine 20 competencies critical to their jobs. The list was rated by members as super critical, highly critical, or critical. The following chart depicts clearly that "Listening Actively" ranked first as the most important managerial competency.

20 CRITICAL MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES

Importance Rating	Survey Rank & Competency
Super Critical	1. Listen Actively
	2. Give Clear, Effective Instructions
	3. Accept Your Share of Responsibility for Problems
	4. Identify Real Problem
Highly Critical	5. Manage Time, Set Priorties
	6. Give Recognition for Excellent Performance
	7. Communicate Decisions to Employees
	8. Communicate Effectively (Orally)
	9. Shift Priorities When Necessary
	10. Explain Work
	11. Obtain and Provide Feedback in Two-Way Communication Sessions
Critical	12. Write Effectively
	13. Prepare Action Plan
	14. Define Job Qualifications
	15. Implement Organizational Change Effectively
	16. Explain and Use Cost Reduction Methods
	17. Prepare and Operate Within a Budget
	18. Justify New Personnel and Capital Equipment
	19. Develop Written Goals
	20. Participate in Seminars and Read

Interestingly, the four competencies rated as super critical were those related to communicating and working with people. The article was entitled, "The 20% Activities That Bring 80% Payoff" [29, p.6].

But how many individuals reading this page have had any formal listening instruction? Recent surveys indicate that the answer is about 5 or 6 out of 100 [27, p.312].

Listening is one of the most demanding, yet least emphasized, factors of the communication process. Yet, listening skills are essential to all communication success as blood is essential to all of the body. Listening is most important in learning, for a student to develop character, language facilities, and total personality. According to Marx (1982) listening is a sign of caring, is basic to responsiveness, and is a key to confidence. Listening undergirds all learning processes, yet a comprehensive definition of listening has not been developed that is acceptable to authorities.

LISTENING DEFINITION CONSIDERATIONS

Listening definition considerations become quite complex as one attempts to define or explain listening. The listening process as currently understood is described in this section. The evolution of a listening definition from 1925 to 1982 is presented. Definitions of listening are explained in order to determine stimuli, components, and characteristics included in the listening process.

Leading communication authorities offer various definitions and explanations as evidenced from a search of current literature. In dictionaries listening is defined in general terms as hearing sounds with attention and giving serious consideration. Krier quoted Steil's definition of listening as: "Listening is a private, silent, internal act and we never know what went on until the listener responds and we see the results" [16].

Doerr asked Steil, "How do you define listening?" Steil answered:

> Listening is the complex human process of hearing what is said, understanding what was meant, making judgments about what you heard and understood, storing all that away, and responding appropriately to what is said. This can be from two different viewpoints--from that of the sender or the listener. We're talking about observable, measurable, learned, and improvable behavior [8].

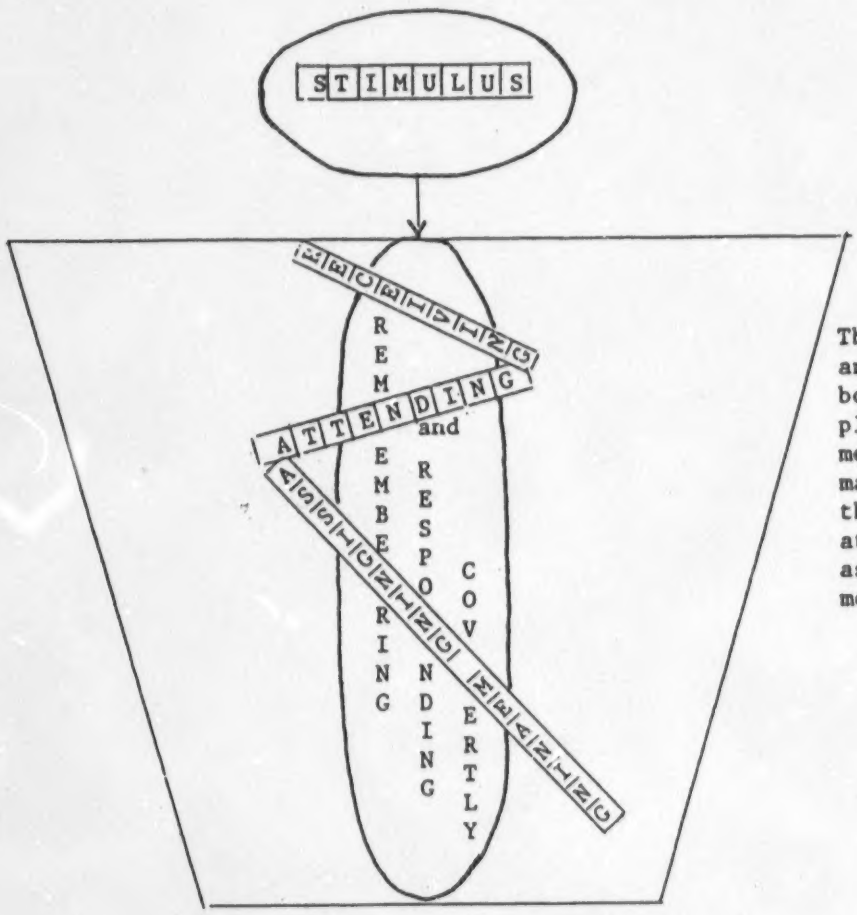
Wolvin/Coakley offer the "Wolvin-Coakley Structural Definition and Model of Listening." They define listening as the process of receiving, attending to, and assigning meaning to aural stimuli [31, p.52]. Listening is an active, thinking communication activity that requires effort, energy, and time. Listening is a social activity, contrasted by reading that is a solitary activity [31, p.32]. This writer (West) concludes that, in general, listening may be defined as engaging actively in hearing, attending, making honest effort to understand what the speaker says, and responding appropriately. Listening, however defined, is an integral part of one's daily life and is an activity in which one should engage throughout one's lifetime.

FIVE LISTENING PURPOSES

Several communication authorities cite various purposes of listening. However, Wolvin/Coakley cite five listening purposes that included appreciative, discriminative, comprehensive, therapeutic, and critical.

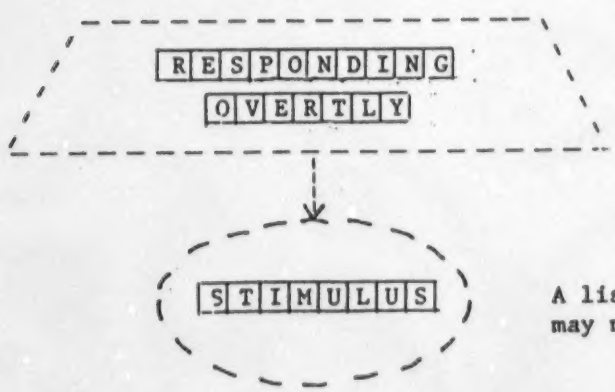
Appreciative listening is highly individualized. This type of listening can be improved by conscious effort by the speaker to: (1) express ideas accurately, clearly, and concisely; (2) select the appropriate style for the speaker, audience, and occasion; (3) use vivid

Wolvin-Coakley Model of the Listening Process



The Listening Cone

The wide top and narrow bottom exemplify that more stimuli may be received than will be attended or assigned meaning.



The Feedback Cone

A listener may or may not send feedback.

"picture" words, and (4) deliver the message with enthusiasm when appropriate. Likewise the receiver must listen for each of the four factors. Also the listener must determine what and why one enjoys particular listening settings. One should develop a strong sense of curiosity, especially for appreciative listening. According to Nichols and Lewis, one's willingness to learn is a major factor in appreciative listening [26, pp.61-9].

Discriminative listening is listening to distinguish the aural stimuli. Depending upon the communication context, however, the stimuli may be visual, as well as verbal [31, p.73]. Discriminative listening" . . . requires careful concentration, keen observation, and conscious recognition of the auditory and/or visual stimuli" [31, p.81]. Discriminative listening skill development is a continuous process.

Comprehensive listening is listening for understanding of the message. Success is realized when the listener receives, attends to, and assigns meaning to the message as closely as possible to that which the speaker intended. This purpose has received the most attention, probably because it is the most "testable."

Comprehensive listening can be improved by desiring to improve one's memory; then, by concentrating, practicing, and caring to listen. The vocabulary of the speaker and listener is an important variable in listening comprehension according to Petrie as referenced by Wolvin/Coakley. Other variables to be considered include: age, auditory acuity, backgrounds of the speaker and listener, cultural status, environmental factors, experience is listening, intelligence, interest in the subject matter, motivation, organizational ability, personality characteristics, sex, and socioeconomic factors [31, p.87].

Therapeutic listening involves use of discriminative and comprehensive listening and should include appreciative listening. The one purpose of therapeutic listening is to provide the speaker with a "sounding board" without guiding or directing the speaker. Wilkinson/Clarke/Wilkinson (1983) emphasize that listening is a major factor " . . . toward avoiding conflict by understanding that person . . . listening is, after all, the basis of counseling and psychiatry" [30, p.638].

Critical listening involves the use of discriminative and comprehensive listening, may include appreciative and therapeutic listening, and includes evaluation and judgment. Critical listening should be used when listening to persuasive messages. Aristotle determined that persuasive messages have three components. They are: ethos (speaker credibility), logos (logical arguments), and pathos (psychologial appeals) [31, p.127]. The five listening purposes include numerous listening factors.

EIGHT LISTENING FACTORS

Listening is a complex process and is vital to all oral communication activities. Eight listening factors delineated in this section include: willingness, attention, reception, concentration, perception, nonverbal, value moment, and feedback.

Willingness

First, one must be willing to participate in listening activities as determined by a psychological mind set. Awareness of the need to develop one's abilities and skills is of primary importance. Individuals must become conscious of the ability to hear and to listen. An examination can determine hearing acuity. When hearing is normal, awareness means knowledge of listening abilities and habits. According to Bowman and Branchaw (1977) "Listening is more than hearing" [3, p.135]. Tney refer to hearing as a physical, passive process; while listening is a mental, active process. They emphasize that one hears words but must listen for meaning and that "Hearing is easy; listening is work" [3, p.136]. They state that hearing is a gift, but listening is an art [3, p.136].

Second of importance is to know yourself. Try to understand why you believe, feel, and perceive the way you do about fundamental priniples--determine your philosophy of life. Philosophy governs the conscious behavior of most individuals and their relationships with others. The Judaeo-Christian teachings form the basis for legal standards and are the core for personal standards of many people. According to Aronoff, et. al., one must listen to one's self. One must recognize one's " . . . own beliefs, biases, and motives as they relate to the speaker, the listening situation, and the information being received" [1, p.238]. Maynard (1981), who teaches general semantics, emphasizes that people should be trained to make "sound" observations of statements that can be turned into ". . . an adequate premise leading to a sound decision" [23, p14]. He states that "Too many people operate on beliefs" and that "It isn't so much what we don't know that gets us in trouble; it's what we think we know that isn't so" [23, p.13]. Statements ". . . tend to fall into three main types: factual, inferential, and judgmental statements." He emphasizes that ". . . it's very difficult in the rapid verbal ping pong games we play with each other to know where fact begins and ends and where inference and judgment start" [23, p.14].

Mayerson concludes that the listener must believe that speakers "i . . have something to say and allow them to say it" [22, p.103]. Aronoff indicates that " . . . listeners develop particular attitudes toward speakers and listening situations. To become an active listener, you must respect other people's potential worth, consider their rights, and have confidence in their capacity for self-direction" [22, p.239]. Mayerson indicates that "Action by listeners that interferes with their own willingness to listen is stereotyping," and that stereotyping acts as a censor. He advocates that "Categorizing helps provide quick and

easy processing." It helps one recognize something one has never seen before, [22, p.103]. The willingness to listen aids in the development of positive attitudes and may indicate interest and trust in the speaker. When one has an appropriate mind set, one will pay attention.

Attention

Aronoff, et. al., describe attention as ". . . a willingness to expose yourself to certain stimuli" [1, p.234]. They indicate that in general, people attend to stimuli that relate to their goals or objectives, that satisfy their social needs, that they have learned or habitually select, or that are unexpected. Attention encompasses receiving and assigning meaning to stimuli. To recognize something we have never seen before is to respond to stimuli. To recognize involves receiving and attending to stimuli. How one resonds is determined in part by assigning meaning to stimuli. Murphy/Peck (1980) encourage listeners to be attentive to everything the speaker does or says [25, p.679].

Lesikar (1980) encourages undivided attention by the listener so that the speaker will be more relaxed [18, p.501]. Lesikar (1982) emphasizes that paying attention requires being alert and disciplining the mind [17, p.515]. According to Lesikar (1980) ". . . you must work to pay attention" [18, p.505]. Bonner/Voyles (1980) state that attention is easy when the listener is interested [2, p.315].

One must be willing to "find areas of interest." See Appendix for "10 Keys to Effective Listening." The areas of interest as well as the other nine keys are factors in the reception of the message and the meaning that will be assigned to stimuli received through the sensory channels [1, p.235]. Bonner/Voyles state that the accomplished, proficient listener will receive ideas that the less competent listener never hears [2, p.315]. Aronoff, et. al., quote William James: "What holds attention determines action" [1, p.233]. Action that is determined as a result of the reception of the message.

Reception

Aronoff, et. al., describe reception briefly as the actual physical impingement of stimuli on sensory organs [1, p.234]. Mayerson refers to silent cues that include the listener's posture and gestures that can affect the discussion [22, p.111]. Aronoff, et. al., compare listening reception to being tuned to a particular radio station in that "Reception does not occur until you turn on your set" [1, p.234]. They state that two variables influencing reception are ability and noise [1, p.234]. Either variable may affect concentration.

Concentration

Concentration consists of successful time management of the "lag between speech and thought [14, p.266]. Lag time occurs during the interaction of communicating and involves three factors. These include acknowledgment, statements of one's own needs, and future commitment. Effective concentration demands mental discipline. Wilkinson/Clarke/Wilkinson emphasize that "The essential time for concentration is when the speaker announces the subject, why it is pertinent, and then the plan of presentation" [30, p.638].

One must be knowledgeable of the difference in normal speaking and listening speeds. Four listening, speaking, and thinking time comparisons are cited. Sigband/Bateman indicate that an individual's speaking speed is about 150 words a minute (wam), while one's listening speed is about 600 wam [27, p.313]. Himstreet/Batey indicate that individuals speak about 100 to 200 wam, read at two or three times the speaking rate, and think several times faster than the reading rate [13, p.263]. Cary states that "Most of us can think four times faster than someone can talk" [5, p.18]. Hayes emphasizes that people are capable of speaking 200-300 wam and "We have the 'capacity' to listen well at speeds of 500 wam. . ." [12]. Therefore, a disparity exists in the speaking, listening, and thinking speeds. This disparity can create problems in the ability to concentrate while listening. Listeners' minds may wander because of such differences in speed for sending and receiving messages.

Because listening necessitates decoding correctly the speaker's words, Murphy/Peck (1980) emphasize concentration on the verbal message [25, p.679]. Bonner/Voyles (1980) indicate that concentration requires effort as the eyes work against the ears when visual distractions occur. The listener must control emotions and can increase comprehension by retaining concentration and relating the speaker's message to the listener's knowledge [2, p.314]. Huseman, et. al., indicate that when listening for total meaning, (two important elements include: content and meaning, and the attitude of feeling underlying this content) concentration is required. Haney states that concentration for both explicit and implicit meaning is demanded [11, p.491]. Mayerson states that even the most time-pressured person will find time to do the things that one really wants to do. He states that usually a person makes time and gives attention to a message that offers "a payoff" [22, p.104].

Wilkinson, et. al., encourage that a listener take notes sparingly, but recommends to divide a sheet of paper into two columns--one for principles and one for facts. Concentration should be on the principles [30, p.639]. One must use the differential time between speaking and hearing the review, summarize, evaluate, anticipate next point, and interpret nonverbal factors of the message. One should concentrate on main ideas, organize significant details, and psychologically one should have a positive, open-minded attitude. Concentration is influenced by perception.

Perception

Brown (1982) defines perception as interpretation that leads to understanding [4, p.30]; or as Aronoff, et. al., indicate, words have meanings as understood by listeners. Perception consists of making sense out of experience" [1, p.235]. They state that "Perception is a process of constructing meaning based on apprehended symbolic stimuli. It is based upon the listener's frame of reference, standards, values, attitudes, beliefs, ideas, expectations, roles, needs, experience, and personal history" [1, p.235].

To improve perception, one must consider the frame of reference to which the speaker and listener relate the message. According to Brown, "Syntax refers to the standardized relationships among words established in our language system over a period of years" [4, p.38]. "Semantics deals with word meanings according to the idea, attitude, or emotion conveyed: [4, p.53]. Both are important for the speaker and listener to relate within a similar frame of reference. In face-to-face communication, the listener's concentration and perception will be influenced by nonverbal factors.

Nonverbal

A limited discussion is included on nonverbal factors. Huseman, et. al., present a comparision of verbal and nonverbal communication as: facial expression, body position, gestures account for 55 percent of message impact; tone of voice and reflection account for 38 percent; and words account for 7 percent [14, p.73]. Murphy/Peck (1980) emphasize that responsibilities of the listener include observation of nonverbal factors. Some of these include the speaker's gestures, voice tone, and physical movements [25, pp.679-80].

Brown (1982) indicates that nonverbal clues aid in establishing reliability and reinforcing the verbal message [4, p.30]. He defines three segments of nonverbal communication as: (1) kinesics, (2) proxemics, and (3) paralanguage. Kinesics is the segment that includes all body movement made by hands, head, face, eyes, arms, legs, and posture that give meaning intentionally and unconsciously to the listener [4, p.46]. Proxemics is the segment that involves the distance that people place themselves relative to the persons with whom they talk [4, p.50]. Paralanguage areas include: voice qualities--pitch, resonance, volume, rate, and rhythm; vocal characterizers--laughter, coughing, throat clearing, and sighing; vocal qualifiers--variations in pitch and volume; voice segregates--"ahs," "ers," and pauses [4, p.52].

Value Moment

Fazendin emphasizes that in every conversation, a value moment of listening exists as the speaker tries to communicate one specific message. That message may be surrounded by numerous adjectives, adverbs, and phrases; therefore, the listener does not know when the value moment of listening will occur. When the value moment of

listening occurs, the listener hears the major message. Therefore, one must be prepared at all times to listen by focusing attention on the message and preparing to provide feedback.

Feedback

Feedback, retention, and further action are pertinent factors in completing the listening process. Bonner/Voyles emphasize to "Look at your listener frequently to get feedback" [2, p.316]. Feedback is very important to the listening process, although discussions of the importance are omitted frequently. Appropriate, timely feedback can reassure and reinforce the speaker [14, p.267]. Therefore, affirmative leads are important in speaking and listening. "We all need corroboration of our right to speak. We must know that the listener hears us and more, continues to want to hear us" [22, p.112].

Mayerson defines feedback as ". . . the loop that closes the circuit of language" [22, p.112]. Feedback is important in four ways: ". . . for reflection, for empathy, for ventilation, and for confrontation" [22, p.114].

Listening for retention means the storing in one's memory the information gained [1, p.236]. Since one's capacity to store and recall information is affected by all factors that influence other areas of the listening process, one can increase listening retention for further action. Further action may be immediate or delayed as determined to meet one's goals. Through active, constructive, and honest feedback, the listener participates as an equal partner in the communication process. Listening skills can be improved through practice of the guidelines presented in the subsequent section.

PERTINENT GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS

Guidelines pertinent to improving listening skills are classified as those more applicable to speakers than to the listeners, those more applicable to the listeners than to the speakers, and those applicable to both speakers and listeners simultaneously.

As speakers the following ten guidelines that are adapted from "The Ten Commandments of Good Communication," by the American Management Association will help improve listening skills:

1. Seek to clarify ideas before communicating
2. Identify the purpose, recognize the intent, plan and organize the content of the message
3. Consult with others, when appropriate, in planning the message
4. Consider the total physiological and environmental settings as nearly as possible
5. Get the attention of the listener(s)
6. Be mindful, while communicating, of the overtone as well as

the basic connotative and denotative word meanings contained in the message
7. Take the opportunity, when it arises, to convey something of help or value to the receiver
8. Follow up on the message. Communicate for tomorrow as well as for today
9. Be sure nonverbal communication supports verbal communication
10. Seek to understand as well as to be understood--WORK at being an effective listener as well as an effective speaker [Adapted, 6, pp.490-1].

As listeners the following ten guidelines can be useful:

1. Realize that listening consumes energy and is work
2. Prepare to listen. Exert conscious listening effort. Be attentive and genuinely interested
3. Concentrate on areas of interest--the main idea, supportive ideas, and then filter non-essentials
4. Focus on the content, not the speaker's appearance and delivery
5. Listen for the total meaning and anticipate what the speaker will say next
6. Explore what is spoken/unspoken. When appropriate, ask questions to clarify meanings and/or to reinforce the message
7. Control the temptation to interrupt unnecessarily
8. Adapt decision making processes, capitalize on, and use your thought speed to summarize key ideas as time permits
9. Take notes sparingly in outline form
10. Evaluate to understand key word choice and usage

Both speakers and listeners can benefit simultaneously by practicing these ten guidelines:

1. Exercise your mind, but be aware of your deficiencies
2. Maintain a positive democratic attitude, participate actively, and respond appropriately
3. Define how you may benefit as a result of the communication
4. Communicate without assumptions, biases, distractions, inferences, and preconceived opinions or prejudices. Avoid hasty, judgmental evaluation
5. Create a climate of equality by overcoming cultural and socio-economic differences so that each may "feel free" to communicate within the topic frame of reference
6. Practice eye contact and smiling in order to portray acceptance and warmth so that each "feels" safe enough to incorporate new experiences and new values into self-concept. Practice proper posture by sitting or standing erect.
7. Give full attention and use appropriate nonverbal communication techniques
8. Be flexible and receptive to others
9. Use feedback and strive for understanding

10. Maintain calm emotions and patience (many people think aloud)

Ineffective listening is like racing your engine with your gears in neutral; but effective listening can accelerate economic, political, and social progress. Business productivity can be increased. Human relations can be improved. Benefits can be worthwhile for all who exert the effort to improve. Instruction for developing listening abilities and improving listening skills can be promoted by YOU!

SUMMARY

Listening is the most basic communication skill and undergrids all learning processes as it is the primary channel of classroom instruction throughout all educational levels. Historically, listening has been the most neglected instructional area. However, in 1978 the federal government, through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, added listening and speaking to reading, writing, and arithmetic as determinants of literacy and as needed basic competencies [31, p.11].

Now the historical neglect may be ending. Minnesota, Massachusetts, Michigan, Vermont, and Virginia have already included listening on their list of required basic skills. Lyman K. Steil, who is recognized as the "number one son" and a missionary of listening instruction, was responsible for founding The International Listening Association in 1979.

Through proficient use of listening instruction, people can learn listening guidelines and can develop listening skills in ways similar to learning mathematics, physical education, reading, and writing. They can communicate more accurately, with positive attitudes, to gain useful information, and to improve understandings.

Both the listener and the speaker can become more receptive to pertinent communication of others; respond with open, honest, constructive, meaningful feedback; and strive to both understand and to be understood. Each will be able to fulfill certain basic responsibilities important in effective listening activities. Each should understand himself or herself as a communicator and should strive for self-motivation through self-analysis and applications to listening behavior. Each should be able to participate as an equal partner in the communication process. As Walt Menninger stated, "What this country needs is more good listeners!" [31, p.8].

APPENDIX

10 Keys to Effective Listening	The Bad Listener	The Good Listener
1. Find areas of interest	Tunes out dry subjects	Opportunizes; asks "what's in it for me?"
2. Judge content not delivery	Tunes out if delivery is poor	Judges content, skips over delivery errors
3. Hold your fire	Tends to enter into argument	Doesn't judge until comprehension complete
4. Listen for ideas	Listens for facts	Listens for central themes
5. Be flexible	Takes intensive notes using only one system	Takes fewer notes. Uses 4-5 different systems, depending on speaker
6. Work at listening	Shows no energy output. Attention is faked	Works hard, exhibits active body state
7. Resist distractions	Distracted easily	Fights or avoids distractions, tolerates bad habits, knows how to concentrate
8. Exercise your mind	Resists difficult expository material; seeks light, recreational material	Uses heavier material as exercise for the mind
9. Keep your mind open	Reacts to emotional words	Interprets color words; does not get hung up on them
10. Capitalize on fact, thought is faster than speech	Tends to daydream with slow speakers	Challenges, anticipates, mentally summarizes, weighs the evidence, listens between the lines to tone of voice (Sigband and Bateman, p. 389) originally from

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